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not naked, the one indeed having a face of exquisite and ideal beauty, while Manet's woman—evidently a portrait—is, to say the least, coarse.

All the casuistry in the world will not prevent the sane public from seeing that the spirit in which Giorgione worked was entirely more lofty than that which actuated Manet. As Goethe said: "The spirit in which we act is the main matter, for spirit alone can transform action."

Giorgione's picture is simply a piece of poetry—

poetry of line, poetry of color, poetry of spirit. It tells us nothing definite, it is true, like the "Sistine Madonna" of Raphael, and therefore, is not in that highest class of poetic works. But, like Poe's "Raven" which, unlike Keats' "Ode to a Grecian Urn" also tells us nothing definite, but is of immortal poetic charm, because of its lifting beauty; so this picture of Giorgione has a deathless poetic attraction which will forever make it, if not worshiped, at least cherished by all mankind.

A DEGENERATE WORK OF ART "LUNCH ON THE GRASS" BY MANET

See page 272

MANET'S "Lunch on the Grass" of which we give a reproduction on page 272 must be put into the class of degenerate works of art, and for the following reasons:

Civilization means—a getting away from the animal.

To do this we must travel towards the Ideal, the spiritual.

To get away from the animal man must reverence something—either God or the Beautiful.

The worship by man of the one or the other, if done in all simplicity and sincerity, will bring him not only spiritual but material salvation.

Therefore, a sincere, beauty-loving priest and a sincere, beauty-loving artist are both lieutenants of the Almighty. The one in the world of Religion and the other in the world of Art.

Both the priest and the artist, when true to their mission, will regard their particular world as sacred.

The first command in the world of Religion is: "Thou shalt have no other Gods before me!" and the first command in the world of Art is: "Thou shalt not defile thy temple!" Manet and his clique of artists forgot this first commandment, nailed on the temple of Art. Hence, their tears.

This picture of Manet is neither beautiful nor ugly. And, singular to say, it is flatly "academic" and conventional in its composition—and he so hated and fought the "Academy"!

There are some clever and some clumsy painting and drawing in it.

But what puts it in the class of degenerate art is its—vulgarity. It is that which takes it out of the class of refined art. The picture is not indecent, but it is more insidiously immoral than if it were, because it is not nude, but naked, and coarsely so.

The picture explains itself. Two couples, evidently free lovers, have rowed in a boat to a sylvan spot in a forest. While the two women bathe in the stream and disport themselves nakedly before these men they look on and afterwards have their lunch. And, while one of the men pretends to talk, two others of the party are represented as if posing for their portraits, the woman being particularly self-conscious in her look. Moreover, she is plain to coarseness.

If a good citizen should happen to run onto such a scene suddenly by mistake, he would be shocked stiff. Why should he not be doubly shocked when such a scene, violating all the conventions of society and implying a whole story of illicit social relation,

is publicly exhibited in the shape of a painting in a great art exhibition to which the public of the world is invited in full confidence of finding here nothing suggestive of immorality and to which he takes his unsuspecting wife and adolescent daughters and sons?

Would it no be shocking if he and his family were not shocked? Would not the failure to rebuke this work be a tacit condoning by the plain citizen of all illicit social relation and a proclamation to all men:—Go, run riot, wallow in sensuality in the open forest to your heart's content, "After us the deluge!" as the Pompadour said?

Is not the picture a distinct invitation to retrograde back towards animality from which mankind has worked its way through so much pain and tears?

That is exactly the view the plain French people took of it, and the Jury of the Salon of 1863 promptly refused it. But in that year the "Modernistic" party, of which Manet was—in painting—the standard-bearer, raised such a row against the many rejections of works by the Jury that Napoleon III felt constrained to accede to their demand for a place of exhibition right next to the official Salon, and this was called "Salon of the Refused." Of this we find in the biography of Manet by Duret, a collector, the following:

"The Lunch on the Grass,' by its size, occupied a large place in this 'Salon of the Refused,' so that it was seen nearly as well as it would have been in the official salon. Also it attracted attention, but in a violent fashion, in arousing a veritable clamor of reprobation. Because it differed really, in technical processes (?), in choice of subject and in æsthetics from all the traditions held then for good and worthy of praise. . . . If the 'Lunch on the Grass' shocked by its system of coloration and its technical processes (?) it aroused a still greater indignation, if it was possible, by the choice of subject and the manner in which the personages were handled. At that epoch, in fact, there was not only a manner of painting that the public, after the artists, had accepted and regarded alone as good, there existed also an entire system of æsthetics in the studios and of which the public was a partisan. They honored what was called the Ideal. They conceived great art as belonging to a sphere regarded as elevated, embracing historical and religious painting, the representation of classic antiquity and mythology. It was only this form of art which seemed pure and of a noble character in

which the artists, critics and public were interested. . . . "This grand art had become the object of a national cult. It was an honor for France to perpetuate it. France there showed her superiority over the other nations which, in this sort of art, were inferior to her and remained backward. Thus the love of traditions, the pursuit of what was called the Ideal, anxiety for national glory, combined to make of this art the object of a unanimous respect.

"Manet, however, by the choice and the treatment of his subject had attacked all the sentiments that the others respected, he had flouted the grand art, honor of the nation. . . . That is to say—for the public there was here a défi, a veritable provocation, an audacious display of what all reprobated as crass realism.

"As if there had not been enough causes for arousing the indignation against the picture, it offended against decency in the eyes of the public."

No better testimony, than this, from Duret himself, could be found to prove that, even though a portion of the artists of the time were corrupt, the heart of the plain French citizen was morally sound, then as always.

It is a credit to France that, no matter how corrupt may have been the Imperial Court and its satellites, in all fields of art and politics, the great middle-class, which is too often lampooned by the Bohemian artists and critics, was quick to scent the evil tendency of this large and pretentious work of Manet and to protest against it because it would not support the Bohemians of that epoch in their mental divagations and moral tergiversations.

It was not Manet's new system of painting which shocked the public, but the insidious suggestions of licentiousness in his picture. The clique of artists Manet croned with wanted a revolution in art and he, a Norman, stubborn, red-headed fighter, in easy circumstances, his father being a prominent judge and a man of influence, undertook the lead in the preconcerted campaign of—shocking the public out of its devotion to noble and ideal art. And then he had the stupidity to expect that same public to take him to its heart and call him good and great!

Duret continues: "The idea of thus associating in an open air scene a nude woman by the side of two men in clothes came to him from the Venetians. It was the 'Concert' of Giorgione, in the Museum of the Louvre—see page 271—in which two nude women are shown with two men in clothes, in a landscape, which had suggested to him his combination, and it was in good faith (?) that he asked, when he was violently attacked, why he was blamed for doing that for which none reproached Giorgione. But, in the eyes of the public, between the nudes of Manet and that of the Venetians of the Renaissance, there was an abyss. The one was, or was believed, idealized, the other was pure realism, and as such offended decency. This nude woman had thus added, a superaddition, to the other elements of reprobation which was presented by the 'Lunch on the Grass.'"

Thus is Manet condemned by his own defender. For this sentence of Duret's proves one of two things, either his defense of Manet is a cynical piece of hypocrisy, which he hoped the public would swallow, or that his moral obliquity is so profound that he cannot see that Manet's action was pure and simple social rebellion and his picture a morally

degenerate work of art, because: he attempted at one sudden and fell swoop to force down the public's throat the idea that a realistic representation, and even in the form of portraits, of two, not nude but naked women, picnicking on the grass with two men, with whom they had evidently questionable relations, was a legitimate thing to do in the world of art. If we assume that Duret is an honest man, he is to be pitied that he cannot see that the picture is fundamentally licentious in spirit, whether painted by Manet or Giorgione, even though it is not actually indecent.

Giorgione's picture "The Concert," reproduced on page 271, is charged with an entirely different spirit. The landscape is entrancingly beautiful; the shepherd and his troop passing by show that the group of musicians had gathered together on a knoll, by the side of a public highway, as if it had been then the fashion, like in Greece of old, or in some mythical land, for women to go half nude.

The whole is pervaded with an idyllic, poetic spirit. It is at least refined, while Manet's is vulgar, and vulgarity is, in Art, the sin against the Holy Ghost!

In Manet's picture the scene takes place in the seclusion and secrecy of a deep forest, which makes the action surprising, while in Giorgione's all is open and aboveboard and on a roadside, in full view of people living in the surrounding houses and of passers by.

Giorgione's work is un-moral it is true, because it does not pretend to didacticize, but Manet's is immoral, because it is gross.

That Duret could not see this accuses Duret.

When women in this epoch loll about the seashore in bathing costumes, showing nearly their entire body, no one thinks anything of it—because it has become, by slow degrees, a convention and is tolerated as long as women do not, in gesture, do anything that is suggestive; but should they appear thus appareled in Fifth Avenue, in broad daylight, they would be arrested as violators of public decency.

Manet, in spurning this morally binding convention, violated the fundamental moral law which holds the civilized world together, created a picture the tendency of whose spirit is to counteract the striving of mankind to get away from the animal. Thus he defiled the sacred temple in the world of art, compromised his fellow artists, and he was forced to pay the penalty he richly deserved.

Says Duret in conclusion:

"Therefore, the picture excited an immense railway, it became in its way the most celebrated picture of the two Salons. It procured for its author a noisy notoriety. Manet became on the spot the most talked-of painter of Paris. He had counted on the canvas to bring him fame. He succeeded much more than he had hoped, his name was on every lip. But the kind of reputation which he had won was, however, not the sort after which he had longed. He had thought that the originality of his forms and spirit, reunited in one large work, would bring to him, with the attention of the public, the recognition of his talent; that he would be regarded as a master from the start; that he would be hailed as an innovator, and that he would thus enter the path to success and public favor. What really came to him was a reputation for being a

rebel and an eccentric. He became known as a reprobate. Thus there was established between the public and himself a profound separation, which was destined to keep him, during his whole life, in a perpetual battle."

Was anything else to be expected, above all when we reflect that his "Nana" was even more licentious, and his "Olympia" the most vulgarly naked nude ever forced into the Louvre Museum?

Poor Manet! a man of profound promise but a perpetual disappointment. As Gérôme truthfully said: "Manet might have produced great works of art, but never produced any." None of his works have any poetic charm, all are either coarse or offensively vulgar. There is one exception, which we have here in the Metropolitan Museum. While on the one hand we have his "Christ," an atrociously stupid creation, nearby we have his little "Sword-bearer" which, in subject, color, painting and spirit, is a perfectly charming gem, and probably the only really lovable work Manet ever created!

When we contemplate that work and think what Manet could have done with his really fine talent, had his soul been attuned to winning a place in the

hearts of mankind, by serving it, by lifting it to realms of grand beauty—no matter in what style or what manner of painting—instead of bulldozing his fellowmen with his coarse or vulgar would-be-pagan creations, one's heart sinks within one and makes us pity him.

But he was the crony of a band of talented individuals, all of them mentally warped and morally twisted and denatured by the corruption in the air at the time, called forth by the low ideals of the Second Empire until morals in art were spurned. They and their works were expressive of their age.

Therefore, about the only pictures for which the public will care, after the speculative dealers and interested critics will cease to make noise about him, in order to boost the price of his remaining unsold works, will probably be his "Bon Bock"—a good glass of beer—and the little "Sword-bearer"—trivial baggage indeed for a man with which to go down the corridors of time and about whom so much noise has been made.

Manet might have become a great artist, but moral myopia doomed him to remain in the ranks of trivial though clever craftsmen.

AUTUMN BY THE SEA

The morning makes a light upon the sea,
Curving before me like a crescent moon
With slender violet waves that gradually
Kindle into the fiery fields of noon.

Line upon line, out to the farthest rim
They reach immeasurably, pale as the breast
Of a sick child, and tremulous and dim—
Save where the wind has kissed them out of rest

So hard it leaves a mark all foam and white:
O delicate, violet, autumnal sea—
Like a wide field made for the sheer delight
Of the cold wind to walk on and be free,

Like a clear harp made for the eager hands
Of the September wind, chilly and pale!
There is a wistfulness about the lands
When summer ebbs and all the flowers fail.

Therefore I come to you that guard and keep,
O changeless one, the memory of all things,
The dreams of all the world, in the vast sleep
Of the pale waters drowsy with murmurings.

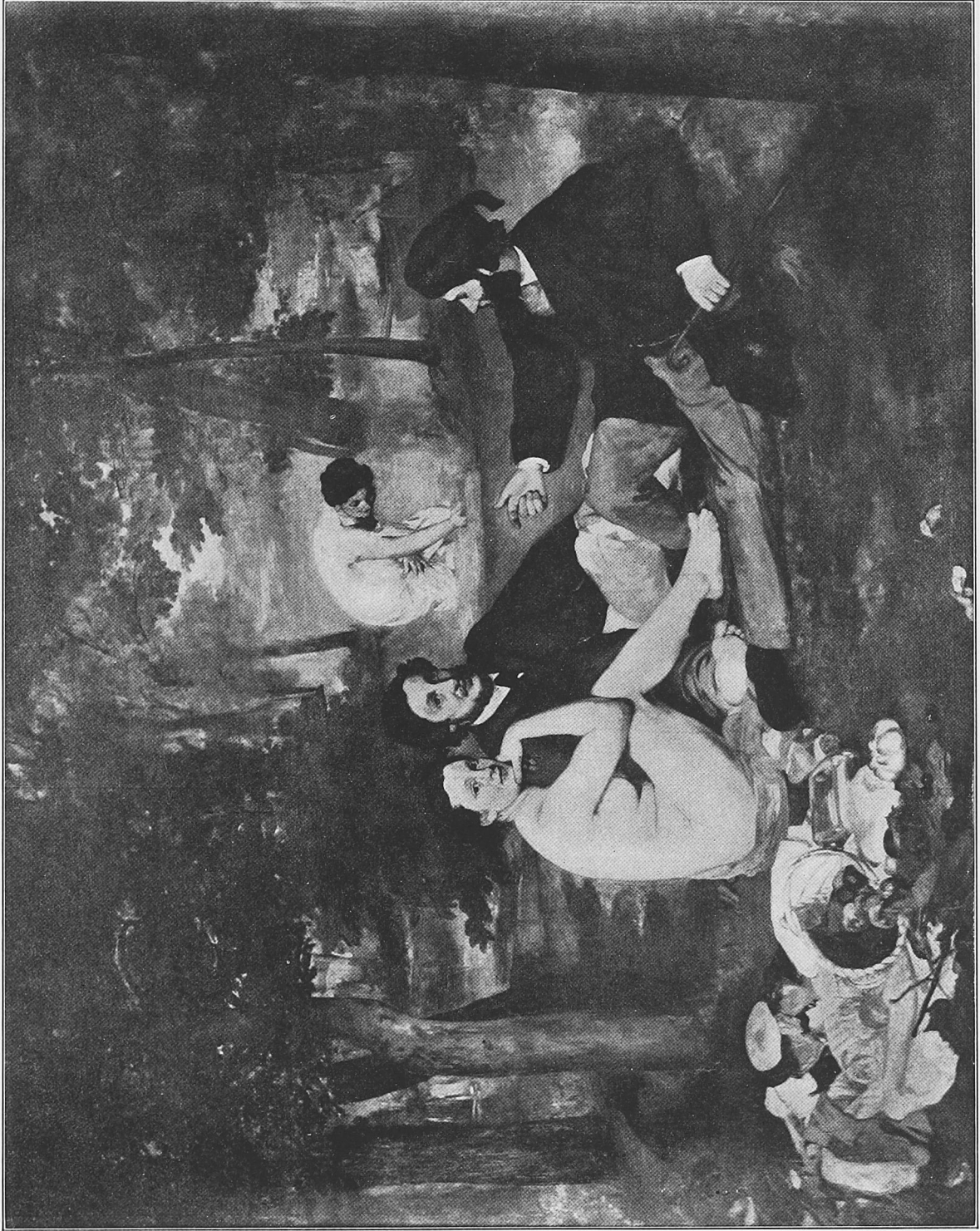
Here deep Eternity has conquered Time,
No trace of ruthless autumn lingers here;
But on the shore the roses cease to climb
And fading wings ebb with the tidal year.

Love leaves the body as summer leaves the lands,
But the waves like the heart remembering moan,
Therefore I sit beside you on the sands
That I may mix my memories with your own.

And the wide, level fields of the flat sea,
Always the same, reach to the farthest bound,
With waves lifting and lapsing endlessly—
And the eternal heavens all around.

John Hall Wheelock





A DEGENERATE WORK OF ART: "LUNCH ON THE GRASS" BY MANET